World Bank loan for power reforms in Orissa

*648. SHRI B. J. PANDA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether World Bank has pledged a loan of $ 350 million for power reforms in Orissa and whether this loan has now been slashed; if so, how much, as reported in the media;

(b) whether the State Government has approached the Centre for help in payment of this loan ; and

(c) whether this has since been paid in full or in instalments; if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE) : (a) to (c) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) The World Bank had sanctioned a loan of US $ 350 million for the Orissa Power Sector Restructring Project in 1996. The loan was suspended in July, 2001 primarily due to persistent delays in release of funds by the State Government for the project. It was restored in January, 2002 on the assurance of the Government of Orissa that timely release of funds would be ensured.

From this loan, an amount of US $ 60 million was cancelled in October, 2001 due to extremely low utilization potential of Orissa. It was proposed to cancel a further US $ 50 million for the same reason but on the request of the Government of Orissa and after discussion with all stakeholders, it was agreed to cancel only US $ 35 million in February, 2003. The loan amount now stands at US $ 255 million.

An amount of US $ 169.180 million has been disbursed till February, 2003. The project is scheduled to end in January, 2004.

SHRI B. J. PANDA : Sir, the World Bank website clearly acknowledges that Orissa was the first State to launch a major overhaul of its power sector. The hon. Minister in his answer has said that this World Bank loan was suspended primarily due to delays in release of funds by the State Government. Sir, the hon. Minister would be aware that shortly after pioneering power sector reform, Orissa got hit by a series of very severe natural calamities. In this context, he has not answered my question as to whether the State Government has asked for any help in repaying this loan and what the Central Government proposes to do about it.

श्री अनन्त गंगाराम गीते : सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य के प्रश्न से मैं सहमत हूं। राज्य सरकारों को राज्य विद्युत बोर्डों को जो सहायता करनी चाहिए थी, उस के कारण फंड्स रिलीज न करने के अलग-अलग हो सकते हैं। लेकिन ये वास्तविक कारण हैं जिनके लिए वर्ल्ड बैंक ने जो 350 मिलियन डॉलरर्स का ऋण उड़ीसा के लिए सेंक्शन किया था उस का यूटिलाइजेशन न होने के कारण उसे 250 मिलियन डॉलर दिया गया है। सभापति महोदय, यह जो 250 मिलियन डॉलर का ऋण दिया गया है, वह भी अभी तक यूटिलाइज नहीं हुआ है जब कि इस का पीरियड 2004 तक का है। सिर्फ 170 मिलियन डॉलर का यूटिलाइजेशन हो पाया है और अभी भी 85 मिलियन डॉलर यूटिलाइज नहीं किए हैं, यह वास्तविकता है।

SHRI B. J. PANDA : My question is : Whether the State Government has asked for any help or any assistance in repaying this loan and whether the Central Government will consider giving that assistance ?

श्री अनन्त गंगाराम गीते : सभापति महोदय, इस प्रकार की कोई मांग राज्य सरकार से नहीं है, लेकिन वर्ल्ड बैंक के द्वारा मंजूर किया हुआ ऋण जो कम किया गया था, उस के लिए जो सहायता मांगी गयी थी, वह सहायता दी गयी है। यूटिलाइजेशन कम होने के कारण 50 मिलियन डॉलर पिछले वर्ष कम करने का प्रस्ताव वर्ल्ड बैंक में था, लेकिन केन्द्र सरकार की मध्यस्थता से 50 मिलियन डॉलर के बजाय 35 मिलियन डॉलर कम हुआ और 15 मिलियन डॉलर अतिरिक्त ऋण उड़ीसा सरकार को मिल पाया है।

Survey of Christians in Gujarat

*649. SHRI RAJU PARMAR† :
SHRI BHAGAT RAM MANHAR :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that All India Christian Council have condemned the Gujarat Government's move to conduct a survey of Christians living in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken by the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I. D. SWAMI) : (a) to (c) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) The State Government of Gujarat has informed that no survey or census of any particular community in the State has been ordered by them.

† The qustion was actually asked on the floor at the House by Shri Raju Parmar